

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace paragraph starting on page 3, line 13 with the following amended paragraph:

The over-voltage detector preferably receives as supply input voltage the voltage via the opened load-current switch (claim 2). The voltage limit, at which the over-voltage detector responds, is defined in this case as the voltage just below the break-through voltage of the load-current switch.

Please replace paragraph starting on page 3, line 17 and continuing on page 4 with the following amended paragraph:

Alternatively, the over-voltage detector can receive as supply input voltage the difference between the voltage at the charge/discharge terminals and the voltage at the battery contacts (claim 3). The voltage limit is then defined as that highest potential at which at least all functionally important circuit components still perform reliably.

Please replace the first paragraph on page 2, of the PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT with the following amended paragraph:

In one preferred embodiment of the present invention a resistive means coupled between load current switch 3 and charge/discharge terminal [[6]] 5, shown in Fig. 1 as resistor 4, acts as a current sensor to determine the magnitude of the charge or discharge current. In another preferred embodiment of the present invention the transmission resistance of the load-current switch 3 may be utilized as the current sensing resistance.